

Message Text

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S E C R E T STATE 293927

NODIS
FOR ARMSTRONG, SCHAUFEL AND SCRANTON ONLY

FOL REPEAT GENEVA 09601 ACTION SECSTATE 2 DEC.

QUOTE

S E C R E T GENEVA 9601

NODIS

TO THE DEPUTY SECRETARY FROM REINHARDT

DEPT PASS LONDON FOR SEITZ AND MASERU FOR AMB SCHAUFEL

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR RH UK
SUBJ: RHODESIA CONFERENCE: THE RHODESIAN DELEGATION'S
STATE OF MIND

1. I CALLED ON VAN DER BYL, PARTRIDGE AND WADDINGTON
ON DEC 2 TO OBTAIN THEIR CURRENT ASSESSMENT OF THE
SITUATION IN GENEVA.

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2. VAN DER BYL TURNED QUICKLY TO ME AND SAID "THIS

GENEVA THING IS NOT GOING TO DO; NO CIVILIZED AGREEMENT CAN COME OUT OF THIS CONFERENCE." HIS GLOOMY FORECAST HAD BEEN REINFORCED BY MUGABE'S PERFORMANCE YESTERDAY AFTERNOON. "MUGABE WENT BERSERK AND BEHAVED LIKE A SAVAGE ANIMAL, NOT LIKE A HUMAN BEING. I NEVER THOUGHT IT POSSIBLE BUT HIS EYES WENT RED LIKE A MAD BEAST. HE IS A DANGEROUS, HORRIBLE THING AND WE CAN NEVER PERMIT MEN LIKE HIM TO JOIN THE GOVERNMENT. IT WOULD BE LIKE TURNING THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT OVER TO HEYDRICH." MAGABE'S EXTREMISM, VAN DER BYL WENT ON, IS FORCING EVERYONE ELSE TO CALL FOR VIOLENCE. MUZOREWA IS A MODERATE BUT WEAK MAN AND IS INTIMIDATED BY MUGABE. OTHER MODERATES LIKE CHINAMANO AND GABELLAH ARE ALSO INTIMIDATED. THIS DISCUSSIONS YESTERDAY, VAN DER BYL SAID, BORE NO RELATIONSHIP TO THE KISSINGER PROPOSALS. SEVERAL OF THE AFRICANS WERE IN FACT INSULTING ABOUT THE PROPOSALS.

3. WADDINGTON, PARTRIDGE AND VAN DER BYL THEN LAUNCHED INTO A CRITIQUE OF BRITISH TACTICS. THE BRITISH, VAN DER BYL SAID, HAD ORIGINALLY ARGUED THEY HAD TO LET THE AFRICANS LET OFF STEAM. AFTER 5 WEEKS OF DEBATE, THEY SHOULD HAVE LEARNED THIS WILL GET THEM NOWHERE. EVEN THOUGH RICHARD CLAIMS HE WILL STAND BEHIND ANNEX C AND GIVE THE FIVE POINTS A FAIR RUN, HE HAS REFUSED TO INCLUDE THE QUESTION OF A WHITE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE AND WHITE MINISTERS OF DEFENSE AND LAW AND ORDER IN HIS NEGOTIATING POSITION. THE DEFENSE AND LAW PORTFOLIOS MUST STAY IN WHITE HANDS IF A COMMUNIST TAKE-OVER IS TO BE AVOIDED. IN FACT, RICHARD IS TELLING THE RHODESIANS, ACCORDING TO VAN DER BYL, THAT THE FIVE POINTS ARE FOR THEM TO DEFEND AND BRITAIN WILL TAKE NO PART.

4. IT IS THE BRITISH PLAN, SAID WADDINGTON, TO OBTAIN FROM EACH DELEGATION A DETAILED DISSERTATION ON THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT, EXAMINE THESE POSITIONS AND THEN FLOAT SOMETHING LIKE ANNEX C WHICH THE BRITISH WOULD TRY TO OBTAIN NATIONALIST APPROVAL OF AND THEN SELL TO THE RHODESIANS. THEY SEEMED TO OVERLOOK THE

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FACT, WADDINGTON SAID, THAT WE HAVE MADE A MAJOR CONCESSION IN AGREEING TO MAJORITY RULE AND WE ARE BOUND TO THE POSITION WE HAVE BROUGHT TO GENEVA.

5. PARTRIDGE ADDED, IT WAS THE RHODESIAN UNDERSTANDING THE BRITISH HAD ALREADY GONE BEYOND ANNEX C. THEY HAD TOLD THE RHODESIANS THAT THE PRICE OF A SETTLEMENT MIGHT BE A BRITISH PRESENCE (OUR TROOPS, SAID PARTRIDGE,

WILL NEVER AGREE TO SERVE UNDER AN ENGLISHMAN) AND SOME VARIANT ON THE COUNCIL OF STATE WHICH MIGHT BE AN ELITE CABINET GROUP WITH UNCLEAR POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES. THE TWO MINISTERS POINTED OUT THAT SUCH DEPARTURES FROM THE ORIGINAL PLAN COULD NOT BE SOLD TO THE RHODESIAN FRONT CAUCUS OR TO THE PARLIAMENT.

6. PARTRIDGE TOOK A MORE MODERATE LINE AND SAID THAT WE HAD TO REMEMBER THE CRUCIAL ISSUE IN RHODESIA WAS THE PRESENCE OF EUROPEANS. A BLACK PRIME MINISTER WILL NEED "EUROPEAN STEEL" TO DEFEND THE COUNTRY AND THE ECONOMY WILL NOT SURVIVE WITHOUT A EUROPEAN BUSINESS AND FARMING PRESENCE. THE EUROPEANS WILL NOT STAY IF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE NEW NATION DOES NOT PROVIDE FOR CHECKS AND BALANCES, INCLUDING AN INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY. IF HAD TO PROVIDE SAFEGUARDS SO THAT AN ARMY-DOMINATED OR ONE-PARTY STATE DID NOT DEVELOP. "WE KNOW WHAT IS AT STAKE AND WE CANNOT SACRIFICE OUR COUNTRY FOR THE SHORT TERM EXPEDIENCY OF A SETTLEMENT." VAN DER BYL CONTINUED, SAYING THAT HE COULD UNDERSTAND WORLD OPPOSITION TO RACIALISM BUT HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND THE BRITISH AND, TO SOME DEGREE, OUR PREOCCUPATION WITH SATISFYING THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS. "THEY HAVE NAILED THEIR COLORS TO THE FLAG POLE OF WILD NATIONALISM. IT IS NONSENSE FOR ANYONE TO SUPPORT A SITUATION IN WHICH TERROR MAKES RIGHT." PICKING UP THE POINT, PARTRIDGE SAID THAT WITH A NON-RACIAL GOVERNMENT IN WHICH SOMEONE WHO COMPETED IN ELECTIONS COMES TO POWER, MODERATE BLACK RHODESIANS IN VAST NUMBERS WILL FLOCK TO THEIR COUNTRY'S SUPPORT AND THE SUPPORT OF THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS WOULD BE LESS IMPORTANT.

7. I ASKED VAN DER BYL WHAT, AT THIS JUNCTURE, HE
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THOUGHT WE COULD DO. VAN DER BYL REPLIED THAT WE HAD TO KEEP UP OUR PRESSURE ON THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS. "WE ARE PREPARED TO MANEUVER AT GENEVA BUT NOT TO PART FROM BASIC PRINCIPLES."

8. SUMMING UP THE DISCUSSION AFTER THE TWO MINISTERS LEFT THE ROOM, WADDINGTON SAID THAT HE WAS ONLY A SERVANT OF THE STATE AND HAD TO SPEAK WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF HIS INSTRUCTIONS. NEVERTHELESS, HE FELT DEEPLY THAT THE TWO TIER SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT FORESEEN IN THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL WOULD PROVIDE THE NECESSARY CHECKS AND BALANCES TO SEE RHODESIA THROUGH TRANSITION. IT WOULD GUARANTEE RHODESIA AGAINST "TRAUMATIC AND SHAKING CHANGES IN THE FIELDS OF TAXATION, BUSINESS, AGRICULTURE AND SECURITY." IF A BLACK NATIONALIST TOOK

OVER WITHOUT ANY CHECKS, RACIAL HARMONY WOULD COME TO AN END AND A MASS EXODUS WOULD ENSUE.

9. I ASKED THE RHODESIANS WHAT THEY THOUGHT ABOUT THE ARRIVAL OF THE NEW ZIPA GROUP. THEY SAID THEIR INTELLIGENCE LED THEM TO BELIEVE THAT AFTER SOME WRANGLING, SOME OR ALL OF THE NEW ARRIVALS MIGHT JOIN SITHOLE. SITHOLE HAD BEEN EXTREMELY EFFECTIVE DURING HIS VISIT TO AFRICA IN STIRRING UP SUPPORT.

10. COMMENT: WHILE THERE IS NOTHING FUNDAMENTALLY NEW IN WHAT THE RHODESIANS TOLD ME, THE CONVERSATION DOES PROVIDE US WITH A CLEAR PICTURE OF THEIR STATE OF MIND. I LEFT THE MEETING WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT THE TWO LEADERS HAVE DECIDED GENEVA CANNOT WORK, AND ASSUMING THAT THEY REFLECT SALISBURY'S THINKING, I DETECT THAT THOUGHT IS BEING GIVEN TO A UNILATERAL EXECUTION OF THE "KISSINGER PLAN." DESPITE REPEATED ATTEMPTS TO DRAW THEM OUT, THEY DID NOT REVEAL ANY CHANGE IN THEIR NEGOTIATING POSITION HERE. THE RHODESIANS ARE NOT ABOUT TO PULL OUT OF GENEVA, AND ARE INCLINED, FOR THE PRESENT, TO HOLD A LOW PROFILE POSITION AND STAND BEHIND THEIR "CONTRACT.CATTO

UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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